

## What is Paganism About?

Paganism itself is an umbrella term that covers a number of religious groups that may share some themes in common:

- Honoring the Earth and its web of life
- Seeing the divine as made up of multiple deities such as a pantheon of gods, or as duotheistic (god and goddess, Lord and Lady – typically found in Wiccan theology).
- Finding that individual practice and experience tend to be more important than following written doctrine or official holy leaders.
- Believing that people are able to do magic or consciousness shifting in order to change themselves and the world around them.

Another way of understanding Paganism is that it can be both panentheistic (the idea that the divine is found both with-out) and animistic (the idea that all things have a spirit). Paganism is a grass-roots movement that has no single doctrine or set of practices that all Pagans share in common.

Modern Pagans may draw inspiration from Native American beliefs, pre-Christian European religions, ceremonial groups, 19th century spiritualism, anthropology, world myths, and the natural world around us.

## Our History

Turning Circle has been meeting since Autumn 2004 and provides free, open events in the central Maryland area. We are not a coven, but are instead an open community of practitioners from diverse Pagan paths. Since we are member-led, and our members follow a variety of spiritual paths, our meetings may include anything from a Wiccan ritual, to a Buddhist meditation, to a Druid high rite, to a Drum Circle in sacred space. We are always learning and exploring. If it honors nature, you're likely to see it here!

## Our Leadership

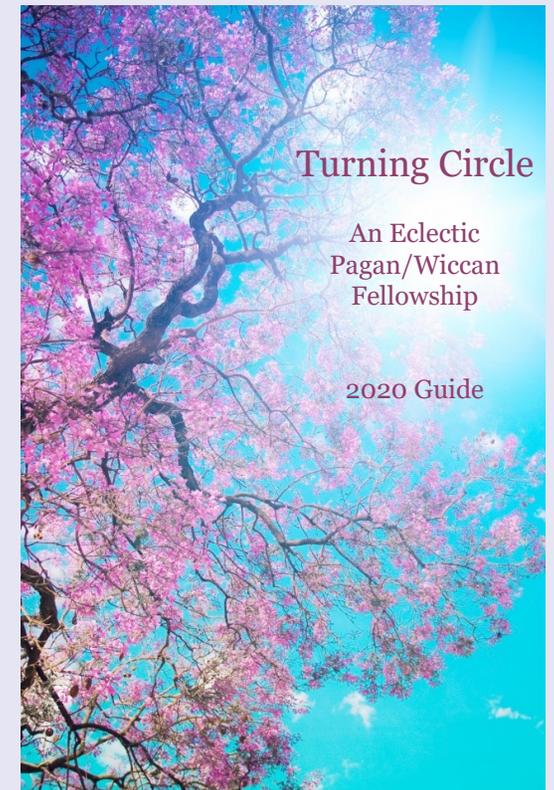
Our Coordinators and Officers are friendly, approachable, and willing to answer your questions.

Phoenix—Coordinator  
Indigo—Coordinator and Web Designer  
Sajana—Coordinator  
Selene—Scribe and Pursewarden  
Valentine—Bard

### Turning Circle

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Follow us out on Facebook!



Serving the Pagan and Wiccan Community since 2004, Turning Circle is an affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia. We are an open, welcoming fellowship. Turning Circle generally meets on two Fridays each month and is conveniently located at the Owen Brown Interfaith Center in Columbia, MD.



### What are the main Pagan Holidays?

There are a lot of varieties of Pagan practices. But, as example, the list of holidays in Wicca and Druidism that are tied to the cycle of the Sun are:

- Samhain—October 31st
- Yule—December 21st
- Imbolc—February 1st
- Ostara—March 21st
- Beltane—May 1st
- Litha—June 21st
- Lammas—August 1st
- Mabon—September 21st

Some Pagan practitioners might also have slightly different dates as well. Since Turning Circle meets on Friday nights, we tend to choose the Friday that is closest to the liturgical date. Check out our website or Facebook page for the latest information on meetup times.

### Turning Circle FAQs

**Q: Is Turning Circle a coven?**

A: No. We are an Open Circle. We are inclusive of the whole spectrum of Pagan faiths (including Wicca) but we are not *exclusively* Wiccan. Unlike a coven, members have freedom to join or leave as their needs change. We don't require oaths of loyalty or secrecy. No one is beholden to the leadership. We are a fellowship of friends and equals.

**Q: Must I be a member of Turning Circle to attend Turning Circle events? How can I become a member?**

A: All are welcome at Turning Circle! Non-members are welcome at all events listed on our calendar. Visitors are welcome. The simply-curious are welcome. The primary difference between a member and non-member is that members may vote on policy changes, vote in planning meetings, and may vote for changes in leadership when applicable. If you want to become a member, it's pretty easy. You must attend three gatherings in a six month period, be a active participant, show an interest in joining, and be voted in. There is a suggested annual donation of \$10 for being a voting member (\$15 for couples and families). However, we can waive that fee for reasons of financial hardship.

**Q: Are Pagan children welcome?**

A: Of course they are! Several members bring their children to our rites and services. Just remember, however, that we don't have a separate activity program for children.

**Q: Is Turning Circle welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community?**

A: Absolutely! So is our parent organization (the UUCC). Additionally, we have LGBTQ+ representation at the Coordinator rank.

**Q: What should I bring? Is there a dress code?**

A: It's optional, but feel free to bring a snack or dish of food to share. We typically have a social hour after our services where members and visitors chat and eat. Some of our members are vegetarians. Most of our members are pretty informal. Some wear cloaks and capes while others wear regular casual attire. You can bring your wand/Athame if that works for you, or not if you don't want to.

**Q: When do you meet?**

We typically meet twice per month, on Fridays, at 7:30PM at the Owen Brown Interfaith Center. This brochure lists the 2020 dates. When in doubt, however, you can also consult our web page, Facebook page, or

### Turning Circle 2020 Calendar

January 3rd: White Elephant Gift Exchange

January 17th: Chinese New Year Celebration

February 7th: Imbolc High Rite

February 21st New Moon Ritual

March 6th: Buddhist Healing Meditation

March 20th: Ostara High Rite

April 3rd: Hawthorn Tree Esbat

April 17th: Waning Moon Ritual

May 1st: Beltane High Rite

May 15th: Waning Moon Ritual

June 5th: American Gods Ritual

June 19th: Litha High Rite

July 17th: Mesopotamian Ritual

July 31st: Lammas High Rite

August 14th: Pagan Book Talk

August 28th: Waxing Moon Ritual

September 11th: Drumming for Peace

September 25th: Mabon High Rite

October 16th: Honoring Departed Animal Companions

October 30th: Samhain High Rite

November 6th: Ganesha Ritual

November 20th: Waxing Moon Ritual

December 4th: Dionysian Theater Festival

December 18th: Yule High Rite

*We typically meet at 7:30PM on Fridays and rituals usually start at 7:45PM and end around 9:00PM.*